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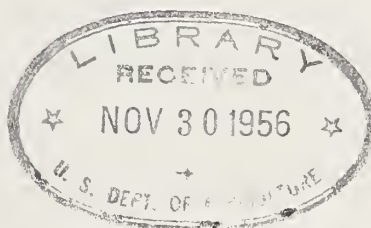
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A Survey of County-wide  
4-H Program Features in  
Selected Kansas Counties

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## SUMMARY

In 12 selected Kansas counties a study was made of the relationship between reenrollment and certain parts of the county-wide 4-H program. Reenrollment in 70 Kansas counties with more than 200 members ranged from 61.1% to 84.0%, based on a four year period. The extreme high and low counties from the standpoint of reenrollment were studied.

1. High reenrollment counties tended to have a higher percentage of farm members and a higher percentage of completion. High reenrollment counties also tended to have more older club members and a higher tenure for club members.
2. Counties with high reenrollments tended to increase their total membership during a five year period while the low reenrollment counties tended to lose membership.
3. More of the farm potential were club members in the high reenrollment counties than in the low counties.
4. Clubs in the high reenrollment counties had more local club service projects than did the clubs in the low counties. However, clubs in the high counties had fewer local club recreation events than did the clubs in the low reenrollment counties.
5. Exhibition at community fairs was higher in the high reenrollment counties but there seemed to be no significant difference between high and low reenrollment counties for exhibition at county and state fairs.
6. The tenure of community club leaders was higher in the high reenrollment counties. No other factors in the field of volunteer leadership seemed to be significant.

7. Local clubs were generally older and larger in size in the high reenrollment counties.
8. There were more group entries per club in the 4-H Club Day contests in the high reenrollment counties. A higher percent of club members attended county camps in the high reenrollment counties. The number of other county-wide events and the 4-H Club member attendance at these events seemed to have no significance, possibly due to the unavoidable chance of error in estimating some of the attendance figures.
9. The tenure of the agent working with the 4-H Clubs tended to be slightly longer in the high reenrollment counties. The tenure of the "just previous" agents working with the 4-H Clubs was longer in the low reenrollment counties. There was no significant difference between the two groups of counties on number of agent days spent on club work per member per year.
10. The mere existence of an organization for older 4-H Club members or a YMW group did not seem to be a significant factor in these twelve counties.
11. Club members took more projects in the high reenrollment counties. The livestock type of project seemed to be the only type of project that was found more frequently in the high reenrollment counties when compared with the low reenrollment counties.



### The Background

In the United States each year one 4-H member out of three fails to reenroll? Why is the number so large?

The purpose of this study was to attempt to point up some of the possible factors in county programs affecting reenrollment of 4-H Club members and to attempt to establish some relationship between reenrollment and certain other statistical aspects of the 4-H Club program such as completion, percent of farm potential being reached, etc.

Some of the items studied included number and tenure of extension agents, influence of older 4-H Club member organizations, number and tenure of volunteer leaders, size and age of club, participation in county-wide events, local 4-H Club social and service projects, club meeting places, completion, membership trends, and projects taken by the club member.

### Selection of the Counties

Those counties having at least 200 members at any one time during the past five years were used as a base. It was felt that counties with less than 200 members have organization program problems that differ from counties with a larger enrollment.

The basis for selection of the "good" and "poor" or "high" and "low" counties for this study was the average percent of reenrollment of 4-H Club members for a three year period. When a fourth year's figures became available they were used for further verification. Reenrollment for a specific year was calculated by dividing the number of members with two or more years tenure by the total number of members enrolled during the previous year.

Ranges were from 84.0% average reenrollment for a three year period for the high county to an average of 61.1% reenrollment for three years

for the low county. Median for the group was 72.3% average reenrollment for three years.

### Collection of the Data

County annual statistical reports and the state club office were used as sources of information, but by far the most important source was the county extension agents in each of the high and low counties studied. These agents were contacted by a mail questionnaire.

From a total population of 70 counties used as a base, 10 high counties and 10 low counties were selected and asked to fill out the questionnaire. Because of inconsistencies in reenrollment which showed up when the fourth year's reenrollment figures were added, a final sample of seven high counties and five low counties were used in the study.

### Percent Reenrollment

County	1952	1953	1954	1955	Average
<u>High Counties</u>					
A	81.2	94.0	76.9	78.6	82.7
B	75.5	97.3	75.5	79.2	81.9
C	79.7	85.8	73.9	82.7	80.5
D	78.2	82.0	79.2	81.8	80.3
E	81.3	82.8	76.7	77.2	79.5
F	78.5	75.3	76.2	78.6	77.2
G	74.9	76.4	80.4	73.0	76.2
<u>Low Counties</u>					
H	71.1	62.0	72.2	68.2	68.4
I	65.2	72.2	53.7	76.4	66.9
J	60.3	62.9	70.6	70.0	65.9
K	67.6	62.7	52.9	77.9	65.3
L	58.1	64.0	61.1	63.9	61.8

Most of the information presented in the study is based on the 1955 program only. While it is recognized that to be completely accurate the programs of the county for the years 1951-55 should be studied, it is also recognized that in many cases recall of information by the county extension

agents for the earlier years would be difficult if not impossible.

### Characteristics of Kansas 4-H Clubs

All clubs are organized on a community co-educational basis meeting at night once a month. Project meetings in home economics and agriculture are held separately.

Leaders consist of a man and woman community leader for each club. The number of project leaders varies by clubs. Each county has a county 4-H Club advisory body called the County 4-H Club Council. A vast majority of the counties have county 4-H Club camps with 70% of the counties camping at Rock Springs Ranch.

Almost every county has at least one county 4-H show and many counties have a number of community fairs. There are two state fairs in Kansas.

Kansas participates actively in most of the awards programs sponsored by the National Committee on Boys and Girls Club Work.

### Number of Agents in the County

Of the seven high counties, five had three or more agents. Of the low five counties, four had three or more agents.

In the high seven counties during the past four years all of the county extension agents combined spent a total of .80 of an agent day per member per year on 4-H Club work as compared with .78 of an agent day per member per year in the low five counties.

### Tenure of County Extension Agents

Only the tenure of the club agent was used in the club agent counties and in the two agent counties the tenure of both agents was used unless it was definitely known which agent assumed the primary responsibility for the 4-H Club program.



The tenure of the agents in the seven high counties was 72.6 months including one agent with a tenure of 30 years. When the 30 year agent was dropped from the averages, the tenure for the seven high counties averaged 31.6 months. This compared with an average tenure of 22.7 months for the agents in the five low counties.

The tenure of the agent in the county just prior to the current agent was 22.4 months for the seven high counties and 49.1 months for the five low counties. When a ten year agent was dropped from the average of the five low counties the average tenure for the low counties was 39.0 months.

#### Influence of Older 4-H Club Member or YMW Organizations

Three of the seven high counties had older 4-H Club member, junior leader or Who's Who organizations and four had YMW groups. Five of the seven high counties had either an older 4-H Club member organization or a YMW group.

Four of the five low counties had older 4-H Club member, junior leader or Who's Who organizations but none had a YMW group.

#### Number and Tenure of Adult Lay Leaders

The number of community leaders per club in the seven high counties averaged 2.0 compared with 1.9 for the five low counties.

The tenure of the community leaders showed a correlation with reenrollment of 4-H Club members. The average tenure of community leaders for the seven high counties was 3.5 years compared with 3.0 years for the five low counties. The range of tenure was from 2.9 to 4.2 years in the high counties and from 2.4 to 3.3 years in the low counties. No attempt was made to answer the question here as to whether the tenure of the leaders caused the higher reenrollment or whether other factors in a good 4-H Club

program were responsible for both high reenrollment and tenure of community leaders.

The number of project leaders per club seemed to follow the size of the club. Otherwise the number of project leaders per club did not seem to have any significance.

Tenure of project leaders was 2.1 years for project leaders in the seven high counties. It was 2.0 years for leaders in the four low counties which answered this question on the questionnaire.

All but one of the twelve counties reported that 100% of their clubs had home economics project meetings. It is believed that the definition of what constitutes an agricultural project meeting at this stage of their development in Kansas would vary sufficiently to make the results almost meaningless.

According to the reports of the agents there was an average of 8.8 leader training meetings in the seven high counties and an average of 22.7 in the five low counties. It is questionable as to whether the same interpretation was put on the term "leader training meeting" by all of the agents answering the questionnaire.

#### Size of Club

The size of club was based on a five year average. The size of clubs were as follows for the high seven counties: 29.1, 27.2, 25.3, 24.7, 23.7, 20.2 and 18.1. Distribution in the five low counties was 37.2, 23.3, 22.2, 21.3 and 20.0.

When the one extreme in the low counties was eliminated, the average for the high counties was 24.0 and in the low counties it was 21.7 members per club.

### Age of Club

Clubs were grouped by age as follows: two years and under, two to five years, five to ten years, ten years and older.

	Percent of Clubs			
	Under 2	2 to 5	5 to 10	10 and older
Seven high counties	5.5	12.6	32.3	49.6
Five low counties	13.9	17.8	25.5	42.8

These figures are consistent with individual counties within the groups with the exception of one county in the low group where 4-H Club work has been extremely active for a large number of years. When this county was eliminated the four low counties averaged 15.6 percent in the two year and under group, 19.7 percent in the two to five year group, 30.1 percent in the five to ten year group and only 34.6 percent in the ten year and older group.

### County-wide 4-H Club Events

County extension agents were asked to list the "name, nature and 4-H Club member attendance at county-wide events held during the 4-H Club year 1955. This would include county camps, picnics, achievement events, 4-H Club Days, officer training schools, recreation events such as parties, etc. Attendance may be approximated as closely as possible. Please list all of the events held on a county-wide basis."

	1	2	3	4
	Ave. No. of County-wide Events Reported	Ave. No. of County-wide Events Attended Per Club Member	No. Of 4-H Day Entries Per Club	No. Of 4-H Day Group Entries Per Club
Seven High Counties	11.4	4.6	4.4	2.1
Five Low Counties	10.8	4.5	4.1	1.7

	5	6	7	8
	Percent of Members Exhibiting At County Fair	Percent of Members Exhibiting At Community Fair	Total Percent of Members Exh. at both County and Comm. Fair	Percent of Members Exh. at the State Fairs
Seven High Counties	80.3	25.5	105.8	14.1
Five Low Counties	91.0	5.5	96.5	12.7



	9
	Percent of Members
	Attending a County
	Club Camp--Five
	Year Average
Seven High Counties	20.7
Five Low Counties	18.6

Column Number 1--average number of county-wide events reported is slightly in favor of the high counties but hardly enough to be significant.

Column Number 2--only three counties were used in the averages for the low five counties because of apparent errors in the figures for the two other counties,

The validity of the figures for both column one and two are subject to a certain amount of error in estimation and should be so treated.

Generally an accurate record is kept of participation in 4-H Club Day events and the figures in columns 3 and 4 would probably be quite accurate. The figures in column 4 seemed to be slightly significant in favor of more group activity participation in the 4-H Club Days for the high counties over the low counties. This significance is more apparent when a breakdown of the averages is given. The average number of group entries per club in 4-H Club Days for the seven high counties was as follows: 2.8, 2.7, 2.4, 1.9, 1.8 and 1.6. Distribution for the five low counties was as follows: 2.6, 1.6, 1.5, 1.4 and 1.2.

The significance in the exhibition figures seems to lie with the percent of 4-H Club members exhibiting at a community fair or at a combination of both community and county fairs. There is a slight difference in favor of the seven high counties for percent of 4-H Club members exhibiting at state fairs, but this difference is slight and it is unlikely that it is significant here.

There seems to be little difference in comparing county camp attendance in high and low counties until a county in the high group which had an extremely low attendance at county camp (5.9 percent) is dropped. When this is done the average attendance at camp for the high counties is 23.3% of total 4-H membership as compared with 18.6% for the five low counties.

### Club Meeting Places

There seemed to be no significance attached to meeting places of clubs insofar as this study was concerned. Most of the clubs met in community buildings, churches or schools at night with only a small percent meeting in the homes. This was true for all but one of the twelve counties. This county (a low county) reported 52% of the clubs meeting in the homes.

### Program Planning

Practically all of the clubs in the 12 counties planned yearly programs for meetings and club activities in advance, according to the reports of the extension agents.

### Membership Characteristics

	Percent Farm Members (4 Yr. Ave.)	% Members 15 to 20 Yrs. Old (4 Yr. Ave.)	Tenure of Members (4 Yr. Ave.)	% Members Completing Projects (5 Yr. Ave.)	% Increase or decrease in enrollment (Past 5 Yrs)
7 High Counties	85.8	26.2	3.32	92.7	+17.8
5 Low Counties	80.5	23.4	2.76	83.2	- 4.7

### Percent of Farm Potential Enrolled (Current Year)

7 High Counties	45.5
5 Low Counties	27.7



On the basis of the study of these 12 counties there seemed to be a slight correlation between reenrollment and percent of farm members. However a later study of all Kansas counties failed to find any significant degree of correlation between reenrollment and percent of farm members.

As would be expected the counties that have higher reenrollment do tend to have a higher percent of older club members. A later study indicated that this is not true of all counties, however.

Tenure does tend to be correlated with reenrollment on the basis of this study but there is no hard and fast correlation that can be made between the two.

The averages for completion in this study would support the hypotheses that a project completed is a satisfactory experience and would result in a higher percent of reenrollment. They also support the fact that a member failing to complete his projects is, in many cases, not encouraged and is sometimes prohibited from reenrolling.

The trend towards an increasing or a decreasing membership would tend to indicate that it is the program rather than the number of members or the selectivity of the members that affect reenrollment. It also verifies the hypothesis that boys and girls will join more readily and stay in longer if the organization has prestige and public acceptance and if "everybody is doing it."

This tentative conclusion is further verified when the percent of farm potential being served by 4-H club work is compared for the two groups of counties. The distribution within the high group for percent of potential farm boys and girls being reached was as follows: 70.1, 49.2, 46.8, 42.6, 41.2, 35.2, and 33.3. The distribution for the five low counties was as follows: 37.9, 34.1, 29.6, 18.9 and 17.8.

### Club Group Activities

The extension agents were asked to indicate the number of service projects carried by local 4-H Clubs as a group project and not to include those that are conducted by individuals. The type of service project might be typified by the following: clean-up and repair a historical cemetery, basket to needy family at Christmas, provide silverware for community cupboard, care and clean-up community building, etc.

Agents were also asked to indicate the number of local recreation events held by clubs aside from regular club meetings. Examples of the recreation projects or events might include Christmas parties, square dancing, swimming parties, picnics, bingo parties, community programs, box suppers, baseball games, etc.

	Ave. No. Service Projects Per Club	Ave. No. Recreation Projects Per Club
Seven High Counties	1.7	2.0
Five Low Counties	1.4	3.1

### Project Work

Club members in the seven high counties took 2.5 projects per member as compared with 2.2 projects per member in the five low counties. When comparing the projects taken in the high and the low counties the only category of projects that seemed to be a favorite for the members in the high counties were the livestock projects. After taking into consideration the fact that members in the high counties took more projects than members in the low counties, the members in the high counties still took 16.6 percent more livestock projects than did the members in the low counties.



